

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 310104
ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 MC-02 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 ACDA-07 INRE-00 /065 R

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APPROVED BY NEA/PAB:PWLANDE
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OSD/ISA/DSAA:COL. MLEISER (PHONE)
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
SECDEF

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E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: MASS, IN, PK, US

SUBJECT: THE A-4 STORY

1. SUMMARY: SHOULD IRANIAN OFFICIALS EXPRESS CONFUSION REGARDING MEDIA STORIES ABOUT US SALE OF A-4 AIRCRAFT TO INDIA, YOU MAY INFORM THEM THAT NO SUCH SALE IS UNDER CONSIDERATION. USG APPROVAL OF MCDONNELL-DOUGLAS REQUEST TO RELEASE UNCLASSIFIED A-4 DATA TO INDIA AND PAKISTAN SO THAT MANUFACTURER MIGHT MAKE A SALES PRESENTATION WAS GRANTED ON CONDITION THAT NO DECISION TO APPROVE SUCH SALE WAS IMPLIED. WE HAVE PASSED THIS TO GOI AND GOP. INDIANS HAVE
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PAGE 02 STATE 310104

NOT OFFICIALLY APPROACHED US TO SEEK A-4 SALE. END
SUMMARY.

2. "WASHINGTON POST" CARRIED STORY DECEMBER 9 TO EFFECT THAT US HAD AGREED TO RELEASE UNCLASSIFIED TECHNICAL DATA ON MCDONNELL-DOUGLAS A-4 SKYHAWK TO INDIA. STORY WENT ON

TO IMPLY THAT INDIANS HAD APPROACHED USG AT LEAST INFORMALLY REGARDING A-4 SALE AND THAT RELEASE OF UNCLASSIFIED DATA COULD BE CONSTRUED AS INDICATION OF FAVORABLE USG ATTITUDE TOWARD POSSIBLE EVENTUAL SALE. "NEW YORK TIMES FOLLOW-UP STORY DATED NEW DELHI DREW FURTHER INFERENCES ALONG THAT LINE. VOICE OF AMERICA BROADCAST DECEMBER 10 MISTAKENLY STATED DEPARTMENT OF STATE HAD APPROVED SALE OF

A-4'S TO BOTH INDIA AND PAKISTAN AFTER EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST RECEIVED FROM BOTH COUNTRIES.

3. DEPARTMENT PRESS SPOKESMAN DECEMBER 9 USED GUIDANCE CONVEYED IN SUMMARY ABOVE. HE EMPHASIZED THAT NO IMPLIED COMMITMENT TO SELL A-4'S TO INDIA WAS MADE AND ADDED THAT THERE WAS NO CONNECTION WITH SOVIET HEAVY WATER TRANSFER TO INDIA COINCIDENTALLY REPORTED IN PRESS. SPOKESMAN ALSO REVIEWED CONDITIONS GOVERNING US ARMS SALES TO SUB-CONTINENT, MENTIONING THAT SALES TO INDIA, PRIMARILY OF SPARE PARTS FOR TRANSPORT AIRCRAFT AND COMMUNICATIONS GEAR, HAVE COME TO ONLY SEVERAL MILLION DOLLARS. VOA SUBSEQUENTLY BROADCAST THIS CLARIFICATION.

4. BOTH INDIAN AND PAKISTANI FOREIGN MINISTRIES REQUESTED AND RECEIVED CLARIFICATION OF A-4 STORY INCLUDING GUIDANCE GIVEN ABOVE. BOTH SEEMED SATISFIED THAT SITUATION WAS UNCHANGED FROM THAT PREVAILING BEFORE PRESS AND VOA STORIES WERE CIRCULATED. PAKISTANIS PREDICTABLY AVAILLED THEMSELVES OF OPPORTUNITY TO NOTE THAT ANY SUCH SALE WOULD FURTHER EXACERBATE STRATEGIC IMBALANCE IN SUB-CONTINENT, WHILE INDIANS AS USUAL SOUGHT ASSURANCES THAT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 STATE 310104

THEY WOULD BE INFORMED BEFORE ANY SIGNIFICANT SALES TO PAKISTAN ARE ANNOUNCED.

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